

# NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

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***For Immediate Release***

***March 4, 2004***

## **PRESS RELEASE**

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on March 2, 2004, **JABRAE D. THOMAS**, age 29, **HOUSTON O. SPILLER**, a/k/a “Boo,” age 43, **JOHN L. TOLLIVER**, age 35, and **ARCHIE DUNKLIN, JR.**, age 56, all of DuQuoin, Illinois, were indicted by a Federal Grand Jury sitting in Benton, Illinois, in a one-count indictment, charging them with conspiracy to distribute more than 50 grams of crack cocaine, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, §§ 841 and 846. The violation took place between January 2002, and February 24, 2004, in Perry County. An indictment is a formal charge against a defendant. Under the law, a defendant is presumed to be innocent of a charge until proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of a jury.

The conspiracy offense carries a penalty of between 10 years’ and life imprisonment, a fine of up to \$3,000,000, and a term of 5 years supervised release. The defendants are being held in custody pending a March 8, 2004, bond hearing.

The investigation was conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Perry County Task Force pursuant to their participation in the Perry County Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative. Under the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative, federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutors are working together to prosecute drug dealers, felons in possession of firearms, and criminals that use firearms to commit violent offenses or drug trafficking offenses in the system that will get them the most time.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Amanda A. Robertson.